MARVEL

018

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STAR WARS™

DOCTOR APHRA

REMASTERED
Part V

It is a time of instability in the galaxy as the Rebel Alliance continues their fight for freedom from the Galactic Empire. In other words, it's the perfect time to pull something off right under their noses.

Rogue archaeologist and scoundrel Doctor Aphra has been blackmailed by psychotic droid Triple-Zero to retrieve his lost memory files. They happen to be stored in one of the Empire's most secure bases.

Fortunately, Aphra has a way in. She and her crew have kidnapped a Rebel general, one Hera Syndulla....

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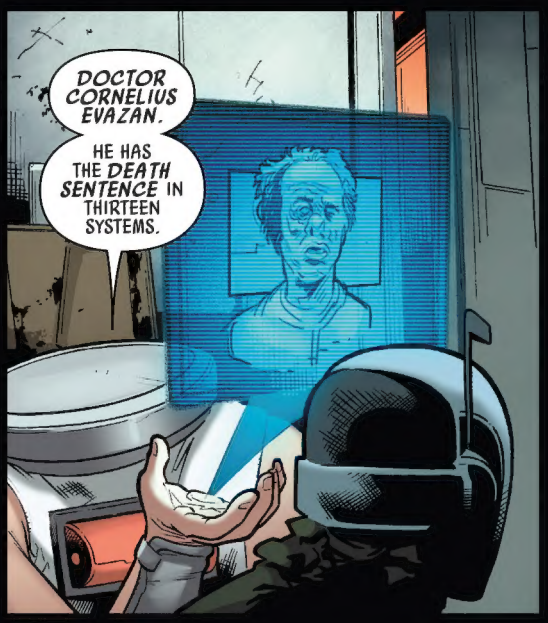
IT'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT-- REALLY.
JUST A LITTLE DING BACK ON SKAKO--SCRAMBLED A COUPLE OF SERVOS. DON'T WANT TO BE A NUISANCE
CAYSIN, IT'S NO PROBLEM-- REALLY. PIECE OF CAKE.
IT'S THE LEAST APHRA CAN DO. SHE LIED AND CHEATED AND MADE US COMPLICIT IN HER VILE SCH--
DO GIVE IT A REST, TAM DARLING. SHE'S TRYING TO BE NICE.
WHAT'S SHE DOING NOW? WHAT'S THAT THING?
IT'S JUST A-- DIAGNOSTIC DEVICE. I'M RUNNING TESTS.
Y'KNOW-- THIS IS SOME PRETTY NEAT CYBERNETIC WORK. WHO DID THIS?
HMPH. OF COURSE YOU'D ADMIRE THE HANDIWORK OF THE MONSTER WE'VE SWORN TO DESTROY. HE'S A SADIST, A KILLER, A TWISTER OF FLESH...
...THE MOST EVIL BEING IN THE GALAXY.
BLEEP
HUH. I, UH...

...I THINK I'VE MET A FEW OF THOSE MYSELF.
BLEEP
YES, BEETEE, THAT IS UNCHARACTERISTICALLY COMPLIMENTARY OF HER.
I CAN ONLY ASSUME SHE'S BUTTERING US UP--PRESUMABLY KNOWING HOW VEXED I WOULD BE TO FIND HER BLATANTLY REPROGRAMMING REXA GO'S COMPUTER RIGHT IN FRONT OF MY =FZZZKKKK=
NOT NOW...
ZZP
WHAT WAS THAT?
NOTHING. DUMB SPACER-CHAT ON THE COMM. BUT HEY--TELL ME ABOUT THIS EVIL CYBORGIST OF YOURS. WHO IS HE?

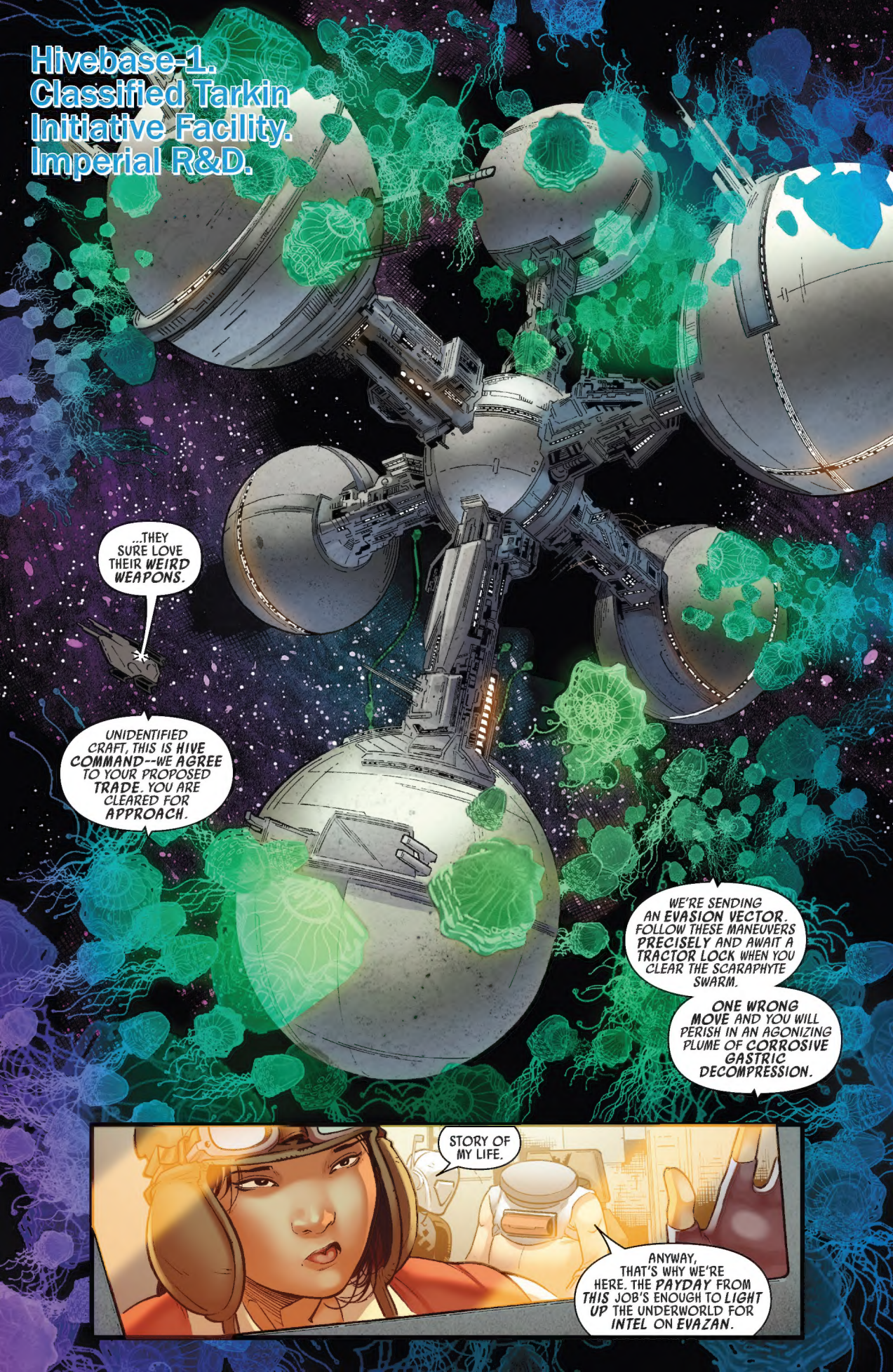

DOCTOR CORNELIUS EVAZAN.
HE HAS THE DEATH SENTENCE IN THIRTEEN SYSTEMS.

A SELF-DECLARED TECHFLESH ARTIST. A PEDDLER OF KIDNAP AND EXPERIMENTATION. THEY SAY HE NEVER STOPS UNTIL VICTIMS BEG HIM FOR DEATH.
JUST SO HE CAN SAY "NO."

I TRACKED HIM TO JEDHA. THE BRASS SAID I HAD NO SANCTION--TOOK MY BADGE. BUT BY THEN I WAS ALREADY...AH...
PSYCHOTIC?
OBSESSIVE?
OVERDRAMATIC?
ATTACHED.
ON JEDHA WE FOUND EACH OTHER. EVEN IN THE MIDST OF EVIL, THERE IS GOOD.

EVAZAN BUILT A HOST OF MUTILATED CYBERSLAVES. THE FIRST OF THE DECRANIATED.
OH! OH! I SAW THOSE IN A CATALOG! THEY'RE AWESOME! UH...NO OFFENSE.

NONE TAKEN. I WAS JUST THE PROTOTYPE.
WE MISSED HIM BY SECONDS. WE HAD TO EVAC WHEN THE IMPERIALS USED SOME HELLISH NEW DEVICE TO DESTROY THE CITY...
YEAH, WELL...YOU KNOW THE IMPS...


Hivebase-1.
Classified Tarkin Initiative Facility.
Imperial R&D.
...THEY SURE LOVE THEIR WEIRD WEAPONS.
UNIDENTIFIED CRAFT, THIS IS HIVE COMMAND--WE AGREE TO YOUR PROPOSED TRADE. YOU ARE CLEARED FOR APPROACH.
WE'RE SENDING AN EVASION VECTOR. FOLLOW THESE MANEUVERS PRECISELY AND AWAIT A TRACTOR LOCK WHEN YOU CLEAR THE SCARAPHYTE SWARM.
ONE WRONG MOVE AND YOU WILL PERISH IN AN AGONIZING PLUME OF CORROSIVE GASTRIC DECOMPRESSION.
STORY OF MY LIFE.
ANYWAY, THAT'S WHY WE'RE HERE. THE PAYDAY FROM THIS JOB'S ENOUGH TO LIGHT UP THE UNDERWORLD FOR INTEL ON EVAZAN.

AND WHEN YOU'VE GOT THIS GUY? WHAT THEN?
WHAT DO YOU THINK, YOU APPALLING MALEFACTOR?
WE'LL BE AT PEACE. WE'LL BE TOGETHER.
WE GET THE HAPPY ENDING WE'VE EARNED.
...
LISTEN TO ME--ALL OF YOU. THERE'S NO HAPPY ENDING HERE. NOT SO LONG AS YOU WORK FOR THAT--THAT WOMAN.
LOOK, YOU DON'T SEEM LIKE BAD PEOPLE. YOU HAVE TO KNOW THE REBEL ALLIANCE WON'T TOLERATE MY KIDNAP. LET ME GO AND I'LL VOUCH FOR YOU WHEN THEY CATCH UP.
YOU MEAN BECAUSE OF THE TRACKER IN YOUR RANK PATCH--RIGHT, GENERAL SYNDULLA?
I... I...
TELL YOU WHAT, I'LL UN-JAM THE SIGNAL. I BET YOUR GUYS HAVE BEEN WORRIED SICK.
UH--WE GOT A SHIP INBOUND, SURE ENOUGH.
WHO ARE YOU, YOU DREADFUL WOMAN?
...HEH.
JUST ANOTHER BAD DOCTOR.

WWOOORP!
HA! WE HAVE THEM!
I KNEW THE GENERAL WOULD FIND A WAY TO ACTIVATE HER TRACKER! COMMENCE ATTACK ON THE KIDNAPPERS' VESS--
UHM-- SIR...?
SHIELDS! RAISE SHIELDS! THOSE THINGS'LL CORRODE RIGHT THROUGH THE
ENEMY'S SCRAMBLING TIE FIGHTERS! SEAL THE HANGARS! MAN THE ION CANNO
THE ROOKIES INTO THE CORE! CLOSE ALL BULKHEADS! POWER UP THE DROID CONTR
ND FOR PITY'S SAKE WILL WHOEVER THAT IS PLEASE STOP WHISTLING ON THE COMM?!

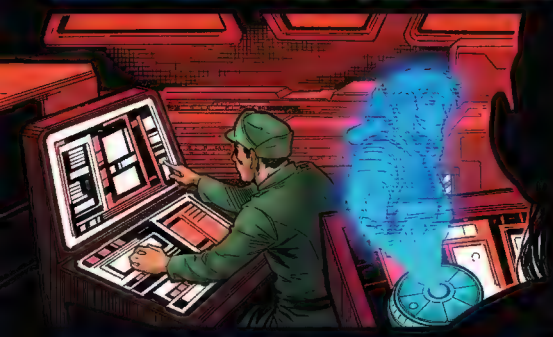
HEY--DOC? DON'T YOU WANT TO BRING ONE OF YOUR EXPLODING TOOKAS?
NAH. THEY'RE ATTRACTED TO ENERGY SOURCES, REMEMBER?
PSSSHT
DUMB THINGS'D JUST MAKE A MESS.
WHAT ABOUT YOUR HOSTAGE?
MEH. LEAVE HER, BRING HER--WHATEVER. SHE'S DONE HER BIT.
YOU MEAN... YOU MEAN YOU'RE NOT HANDING ME OVER?
WHAT'RE YOU, STUPID? EVERYONE KNOWS THE IMPERIALS DON'T DO DEALS. WE JUST NEEDED AN EXCUSE TO GET ABOARD.
AND A NICE BIG SPACE BATTLE DISTRACTION OUT THERE SO WE CAN-- Y'KNOW--
WHOA.

--SNOOP AROUND.
DREAD OHHH THE DREAD THEY ARE COLD DEATH I SEE AN ELECTRIC COFFIN HOLD ME I AM AFEARED--
P-PERHAPS I OUGHT TO GIVE THE HOSTAGE A--
DO NOT GIVE HER A GUN, SISTER SIX.
WHAT ARE ALL THESE THINGS?
THIS IS THE HEART OF THE TARKIN INITIATIVE. EVERY MURDEROUS IDEA THE IMPERIALS EVER HAD COMES THROUGH HERE.
OH MY GOSH OH MY GOSH LOOK IT'S A WOOKIEE WITH A RAILGUN FOR A HEAD THAT IS EX-QUIS-ITE OHHHH.
YOU GUYS DO KNOW THIS IS GONNA GET DEFROSTED, RIGHT? IT'S ALL GONNA COME TO LIFE AND KILL US, LITERALLY ANY SECOND.
THE HIVEBASE IS MORE ARCHIVE THAN FACTORY. THESE ARE REJECTS. TOO EXPENSIVE TO MASS PRODUCE, TOO SUCCESSFUL TO PURGE.
--THAT'S A NANOSLIME CATAPULT AND THOSE ARE HUTT CLONE TROOPERS AND OHHHH I THINK THAT'S A RATHTAR MELDED WITH AN INTERROGATION DROID I AM IN LOVE...
WE'RE ALL DOOMED.

HOW CAN YOU ADMIRE THESE... OBSCENITIES?
SCIENTIST. SCI-EN-TIST. MEANS I LIKE "HOW" MORE THAN "WHY."
AND BEFORE YOU GET ON YOUR HIGH HOVERSLEDGE--NOBODY'S STOPPING YOU REBEL DUMMIES FROM INVENTING YOUR OWN TOYS.
INSTEAD IT'S ALL HARKING BACK TO SOME FAKEY GOLDEN AGE AND BRAINWASHING FARMBOYS.
THAT IS NOT WHAT W--
HEY, HERE'S AN IDEA--LET'S EAVESDROP ON WHAT BLEEDING-EDGE INNOVATIONS YOUR PROGRESSIVE SOCIAL REVOLUTION'S EMBRACING TODAY, SHALL WE?
--WN! I REPEAT, SHIELDS ARE DOWN!
--ALL OUTER DECKS TOTALED, BUT CRITICAL SYSTEMS ARE DEEP ENOUGH THAT THE ACID CAN'T PENETR--
--LL VERY WELL, BUT IF THEY START SHOOTING WE'RE FINISHED! WE NEED TO LAUNCH FIGHTERS! WHERE ARE THOSE DAMN X-W1--
--T WORKING! FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, WHY ISN'T ANYONE LISTENING TO ME?
I REPEAT--THE CONTROL ARRAY'S UNRESPONSIVE! I CAN'T LAUNCH THE X-WINGS!
DID SOMEONE CHANGE THE CONTROL CODES?
GUYS?
GUYS?

COMMANDER OF HIVEBASE-1, THIS IS LIEUTENANT TOLVAN OF THE INSPECTORATE.

I HAVE TAKEN COMMAND OF THE REBEL ACADEMY'S CONTROL HUB.
OOOH. PLOT TWIST.



THIS IS COMMANDER YEWL. YOUR VOICE IDENT CHECKS OUT, INSPECTOR. MY CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR INFILTRATION.
I'VE MODELED ALL PLAUSIBLE SCENARIOS AND SETTLED UPON A STRATEGY--

YOU WILL INITIATE THE VESSEL'S SELF-DESTRUCT--
WAIT, WHAT?
--AND REMAIN IN POSITION TO DEFEND THE HELM UNTIL DETONATION.

TAPPITY TAP TAP

...
YESSIR.
FOR THE EMPIRE, SIR.
NO! NO, YOU TOTAL DUMMY!
JOYSTICK?
THAT IS NOT MY REAL NAME ALSO SHUT UP ALSO WHY DID YOU CALL THE BAD GUYS, YOU UNBELIEVABLE NERFWIT?
YOU LEFT ME A COMMUNICATOR, YOU RIDICULOUS HARPY!
YES! SO WE COULD... YOU KNOW...TALK! FLIRT, ET CETERA. IN PRIVATE!
...
WHAT?!
...IT'S LONELY BEING YOU, ISN'T IT?
LOOK, SIR... MAGNA...I GET IT. TOTAL DEDICATION. CAREER COMMITMENT. SELFLESSLY IMPOSING ORDER ON CHAOS. ALL THAT STUFF.
BUT--FOR PITY'S SAKE--THIS IS MONSTROUS! IT'S MURDER!
...YOU MEAN-- THE THOUSANDS OF ROOKIES WHO'LL DIE?
NO, IDIOT! I MEAN YOU! YOU'LL DIE! AND...

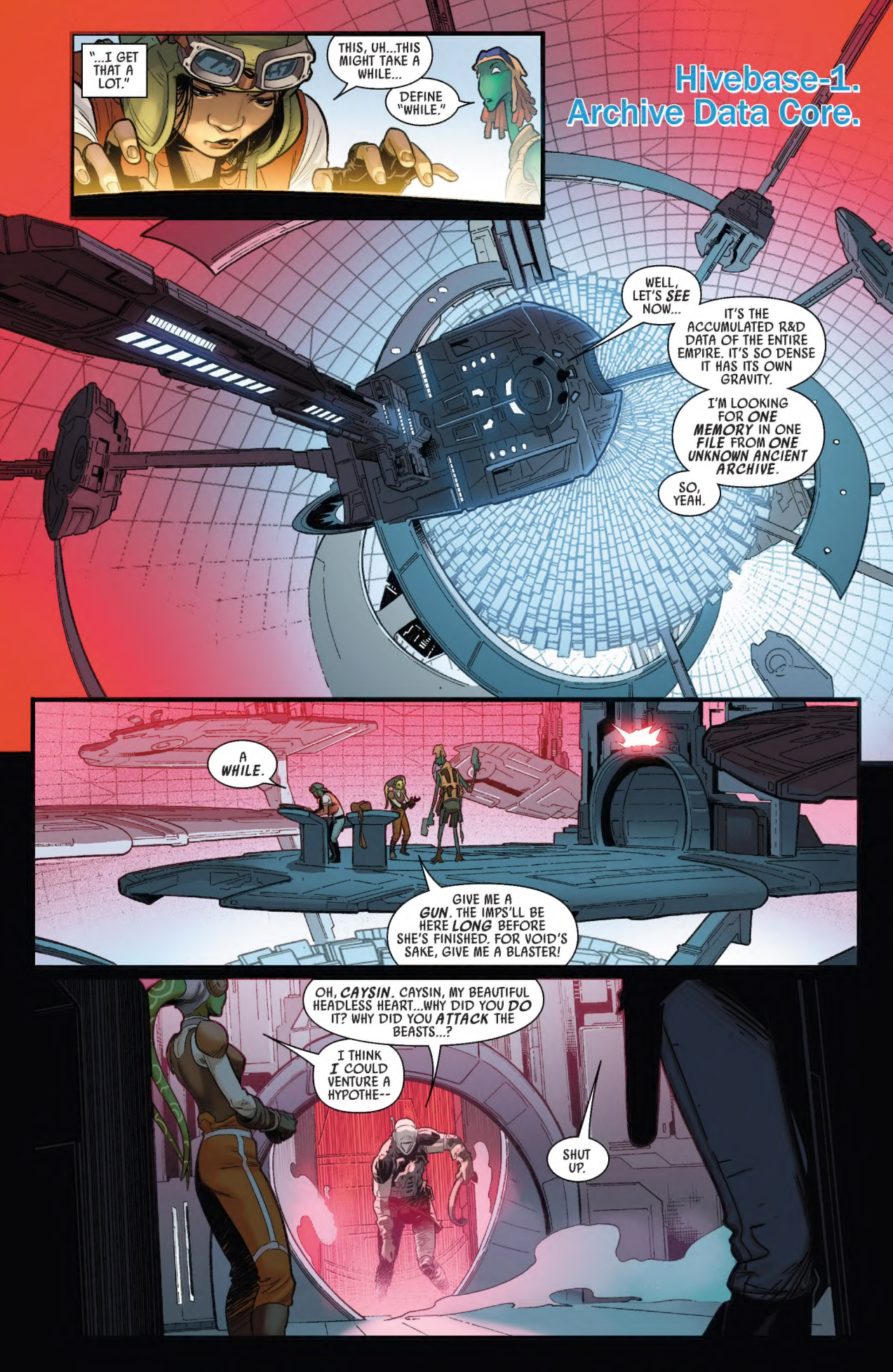
I...
I SORT OF...
I THINK YOU'RE... Y'KNOW.
NICE.
COMMANDER YEWL? I'M DEACTIVATING THE LUCREHULK'S WEAPONS AND ENGINES.
THOSE WERE NOT MY ORD--
NO, SIR. BUT THE CAPTURE OF AN ENEMY CAPITAL SHIP WITH ALL HANDS IS A PRIORITY OBJECTIVE, PER ARTICLE 45-B OF THE OFFICERS' DOCTRINE.
I'M WILLING TO RECEIVE THE APPLICABLE HONORS IF YOU'D RATHER DECLINE.
YES!
BY THE WAY, SIR, THERE'S A UNIT OF SABOTEURS ABOARD YOUR BASE.
NO!
I EXPECT THEY TRICKED THEIR WAY ABOARD. THEY ARE ALMOST CERTAINLY INTENDING TO STEAL SOMETHING. I SUGGEST MAXIMUM CAUTION.
SHE'S RIGHT, SIR-- THAT MERCENARY SHIP SNUCK ABOARD DURING THE BATTLE. ALL OUR SECURITY CREW ARE MANNING THE GUNS, B--
DOESN'T MATTER.

"DEFROST THE REJECTS."
TOLD YA.
POSLA, I NEED YOU TO DO THAT CRAZY EXPLODO THING YOU DO.
NEGATIVE. THESE ARE INNOCENT VICTIMS OF EXPERIMENTATION. THEY'VE BROKEN NO LAW.
ARE YOU KIDDING ME?! YOU'VE GOT MORE FIREPOWER IN ONE PINKY THAN THE REST OF US PUT TOGETHER! WE ARE GOING TO DIE!
AND I WILL DO SO WITH A CLEAN CONSCIENCE. WILL YOU?

DEK-NIL!
M-MY BEAUTIFUL, INSANE PROBABILITY DROID!
POSLA, PLEASE!
I WILL NEVER TAKE ORDERS FROM YOU, VILLAIN.
AAAOOW!
SPARE GUN! SPARE GUN! GIVE ME THE SPARE GUN!
DO NOT GIVE HER A GUN! SHE'LL SHOOT ME THE SECOND SHE GETS A CHANCE!
POSLA-- I'M BEGGING YOU HERE. DON'T MAKE ME USE PLAN B.
THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN SAY, WOMAN. I AM AN INSTRUMENT OF JUSTICE, NOT MURDER.
...FINE. EVERYONE BACK TO THE SHIP.
ZZZK

CAYSIN? WHERE ARE Y--
ADVANCE. ADVANCE.

NNNNNNOOOOO--
THAT DEVICE. WHAT DID YOU D--
NO TIME FOR CHITCHAT-- WE'RE NEARLY AT THE CORE!
POOR POSLA...
SO MUCH FOR THE HAPPY ENDING, HUH?
YEAH...


"...I GET THAT A LOT."
THIS, UH...THIS MIGHT TAKE A WHILE...
DEFINE "WHILE."
Hivebase-1. Archive Data Core.
WELL, LET'S SEE NOW...
IT'S THE ACCUMULATED R&D DATA OF THE ENTIRE EMPIRE. IT'S SO DENSE IT HAS ITS OWN GRAVITY.
I'M LOOKING FOR ONE MEMORY IN ONE FILE FROM ONE UNKNOWN ANCIENT ARCHIVE.
SO, YEAH.
A WHILE.
GIVE ME A GUN. THE IMPS'LL BE HERE LONG BEFORE SHE'S FINISHED. FOR VOID'S SAKE, GIVE ME A BLASTER!
OH, CAYSIN. CAYSIN, MY BEAUTIFUL HEADLESS HEART...WHY DID YOU DO IT? WHY DID YOU ATTACK THE BEASTS...?
I THINK I COULD VENTURE A HYPOTHE--
SHUT UP.

PLAN B, HUH? "DIAGNOSTIC DEVICE," WASN'T IT? "JUST RUNNING TESTS."
SHUT UP AND YOU CAN HAVE A DAMN GUN.
WORD TO THE WISE, MA'AM--YOU WANNA SAVE AT LEAST ONE SHOT IN THERE.
REBEL GENERAL, IMPERIAL BASE. YOU REALLY DON'T WANNA GET TAKEN ALIVE...
AS YOU SAY.
ALTHOUGH I'LL BE NEEDING TWO SHOTS.
=SIGH= CALLED IT.
AAAOOOW!
ZZAT!
SEVEN HOURS.
SEVEN HOURS, THREE MINUTES, SIXTEEN SECONDS.
THAT'S HOW LONG WE PROJECT IT WOULD TAKE, BASED ON YOUR CURRENT SEARCH PARAMETERS, TO LOCATE A SINGLE DATA POINT.
ONLY A FOOL WOULD EVEN TRY.

YOU REALLY DIDN'T THINK THIS *THROUGH*, DID YOU?
TAKE SYNDULLA.
KILL THE REST.

DOCTOR APHRA
NEXT ISSUE:
A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away is a lot easier to get to than you think – and we want to hear from you! Write us at StarWars@Marvel.com if you want to make it onto a future letters page. Don't forget to mark the letter "OK TO PRINT."